Carnegie Mellon University HCII | 2006 MHCI Capstone Projects

Socialstream

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An Introduction to the Project

Socialstream is the result of a Google-sponsored capstone project in the Master's program at Carnegie Mellon University's Human-Computer Interaction Institute. This project was guided by three goals that built upon each other:

Initial Task: Rethink and reinvent online social networking

Refined Focus: Discover the user needs related to social networking and explore how a unified social network service can enhance their experience.

Prototype Goal: Create a system for users to seamlessly share, view, and respond to many types of social content across multiple networks.

Directed to help improve the online community orkut, the project's scope was not to simply redesign the interface. Our team considered how online social networking could bring greater value to users, especially for ages above twenty. After initial brainstorming and research, we chose to focus on the effects of a new model for online social networking: a unified social network that, as a service, provides social data to many other applications. Our user research examined needs related to online as well as offline social networking and considered how they related to a unified social network service model. Through this user research we identified a set of archetypes that represent common behavior patterns that existed across multiple study participants and also formulated a summarized list of their high level needs.

Socialstream is our response to these needs; it is the result of a rigorous user-centered design process that involved formal research and evaluation with over 30 participants.

To explore our final prototype, please visit the solution section.

Continue to the Process Section